



"Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man."

ORIGIN OF THE APPLE TREE.

At the present time, owing to the lack of works or books of a very early date on the subject of agriculture and horticulture, it is very difficult to trace the origin of many of the fruits which we now have in abundance. By origin we mean the country in which they were first found and appropriated to the necessities or luxuries of mankind.

It is generally supposed that it was first found and cultivated in Palestine, it being mentioned in the scriptures, and the bible being one of the most ancient of books, and recording transactions in that region, incidentally mentions many things of the kind.

James Grigor, of Norwich, England, in a communication to the London Horticultural Magazine, on classical fruits, observes that the apple tree is mentioned in holy writ, but I am inclined, says he, to believe that our apple is not the tree alluded to in the sacred text.

In Canaan and the surrounding country it is almost worthless, and is by no means entitled to the praise bestowed upon that tree by the spirit of inspiration. The inhabitants of Egypt and Palestine import their apples from Damascus, their own orchards producing no fruits fit for use. It is impossible, therefore, he continues, that a tree whose fruit was represented to be delicious and comforting could be found in the "crab or wilding," whose fruit, according to Pliny, had "many a foul and shrewd curse given it" on account of its sourness. Besides we find in the scriptures that the apple is classed with the vine and fig tree, palm and pomegranate, as furnishing a grateful repast, and the failure of which was reckoned a serious calamity, an unquestionable proof, he thinks, that we must look elsewhere for the real apple of the holy land.

In Patrick's commentary, it is thought that the word *Theophrastus*, translated apples, denotes any species of fruit emitting a fragrant odor; but this definition is too vague to be useful. The term occurs in six passages of Scripture, and in them all is given as an appropriate title to one of the noblest trees in the garden of nature. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons; I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Mr. G. thinks that these passages refer to the citron or orange trees. Mr. G. does not pretend to designate the native country of the apple, and of course the subject is still in doubt, or rather becomes still more uncertain by his remarks. This is to be sure, is of no great consequence, except as a matter of curiosity, and the natural desire which every one has to be informed of facts in these things.

It is thought by some that our present stock of apples originated from the crab apple, by means of cultivation and crossing one with another, and as the crab apple is indigenous to Europe, that Europe is, therefore, the native place of this valuable fruit. Downing, in his "Fruit and fruit trees of America," says: "The species of crab from which all our sorts of apples have originated, is wild in most parts of Europe." He then goes on to state that there are indeed two or three kinds of wild crab growing in this country, (America.) Sweet crab and wild fruit, about an inch in diameter, grows in many parts of the United States; and the wild crab of Oregon, (*Pyrus rivularis*), bearing a reddish yellow fruit about the size of a cherry, which the Chinook Indians use as an article of food; yet none of our cultivated apples have been raised from this native crab, but from seeds of the species brought here by the colonists of Europe. Now it is somewhat problematical to us whether our present cultivated apple did indeed originate from the crab. Cultivate a crab apple as much as you please and it yields nothing more than crab apples. Suppose you take the several species of wild crab apples found native, and cultivate them in an orchard by themselves, you might get varieties of crab apples only. You would by planting the seeds obtain crab apples of different colors, &c., but we doubt if you would get anything above the character of a crab apple after all. How long would it take, think you, provided you had nothing but wild crab apples to work upon, before you could bring them up to the size of a Ribstone pippin, Greening or Baldwin?

The celebrated English horticulturist, late Mr. Knight, is true, improved the crab apple by carefully mixing the pollen of the crab with that of some of the cultivated apples, and then planting the seeds produced, but we have never heard of his doing it, or of any one else doing it by confining the operation to the pollen of the crab apples alone.

KILL THE CATERPILLARS.

If you have not already destroyed the caterpillars on your orchard, it should be done soon, for they will change from the caterpillar to the chrysalis state, and thence into the winged state, and then will deposit millions of millions of eggs, which will be the means of producing more caterpillars next spring than you will need.

There are various ways of destroying this pest. Some take a gun, and, with a small charge of powder, blow them "sky high." Others take an old newspaper, (a fiery political one is best), put it on the end of a pole, and setting it on fire, introduce it into their nest, and thus destroy them with "fire and smoke." Others take a ball of cotton, tie it on a pole, dip it in spirits of turpentine, set it on fire, and thus communicate fire to their den. This preparation of cotton will burn some time, and may be used to destroy a great many nests before it is burnt out. Some take one of Pickering's tree brushes, and putting it on the end of a pole, thrust it into the nest, twist it round, and bring them down, and crush them with the foot. No matter how you kill them, if you only do it.

THE RADIATED OR STAR NOSED MOLE.

We received, not long ago, a specimen of the mole tribe, accompanied with a request to give the name of the "critter." This species of mole is sometimes found very abundant in some situations. The peculiarity in this species is the singular cartilaginous appendages to the nose, which start out like radii from the nostrils as a centre, and present a star-like appearance. Hence it is called *radiated mole*, *star-nosed mole*, *button-nosed mole*, &c. It belongs to what naturalists call the genus *Condylurus*. We believe it is a very harmless animal which burrows in the ground and feeds upon worms and bugs, and such insects as it meets with in its haunts. It probably comes out from its burrow during the night, as it is not often seen in the daytime unless disturbed by the plough or the dogs. What the peculiar design of nature is in forming the singular appendages to the snout we do not know; but they probably aid it in its search for food. Godman, in his description of animals, says the star-nosed mole frequents the banks of rivulets and the soft soils of adjacent meadows, where their burrows are most numerous, and apparently interminable. In many places it is scarcely possible to advance a step without breaking down their galleries, by which the surface is thrown into ridges.

The excavations, which are most continuous, and appear to be most frequented, are placed a short distance below the grass roots, on the banks of small streams; these are to be traced along the margins, following every inflexion, and making frequent circuits in order to pass large stones or roots of trees, to regain their usual proximity to the surface nearest the water.

In a state of captivity, they feed readily on flesh, either raw or cooked, and neither seem to show any fondness for, nor willingness to eat, vegetable matter.

* It is called *Condylurus cristatus*.

WOOL AND WOOLLENS.

We suppose that the few flocks of sheep which are left in Maine, (and there are some pretty good ones yet,) have been "shaven and shorn" ere this, and so it is of not much use to jog the elbows of our brother farmers, as we used to do, on the necessity of cleansing the wool thoroughly, and packing it up neatly. The market for wool this spring will probably not be quite so active as it was last. Woolen cloths are low in price, and of course the raw material will be in quite so brisk demand, and prices not quite so high for common wools; and yet there are causes at work which will ultimately bring a change in the market, though we cannot say how soon. These changes are the diminution of the production of wool in many parts of the world. It is true that in the United States there is probably a greater increase of wool in the Western States than diminution in the Eastern, but in New Holland and some other parts of the world, there is a great falling off. We see that some of the Vermonters have been importing French and Spanish sheep at a high figure. We are glad of this, though there is one thing they needn't brag so loudly about, and that is fleeces of 18 and 20 pounds of wool. This is *unwashed* wool, and most confoundedly unwashed, too. Why, we could dirty up almost any of our down east fleeces to that weight.

A YANKEE SCOTCH SNATH.

We examined, not long since, a very ingenious contrivance, invented and patented by Kimball & Sons, of Fitchburg, Mass., for fastening and holding the scythe into the snath.

The old fixtures of heel ring and wedges, and leather and hammers are completely done away with, and all that you want is a light wrench, which you can carry in your vest pocket, by which to start a nut or a screw, accordingly as you wish to fasten or unfasten the scythe. The arrangement is also such that you can place the scythe at such an angle with the snath as shall suit your convenience. Means & Son have them for sale in this city.

For the Farmer.

ROOTS FOR STOCK.—FRUIT AND SHADE TREES.

FRIEND HOLMES.—The present almost unprecedented dry weather, for the season, has already caused a portion of the vegetable tribe to assume a sickly hue, while acres of seed corn vegetate until we have rain. Altogether the farmer's prospect is rather gloomy at present; but let us not despair—let us place our reliance upon the Great Husbandman, who has promised us seed time and harvest—look to our own minds, and strive to improve ourselves and the soil which we till. A season like this will plainly show the beneficial effects of deep and thorough tillage. From a little experience in subsoiling, we are fully convinced in its utility. There is moisture enough in the soil, if we dig sufficiently deep for it; but if the subsoil is as hard as the highway, how can we expect the six or eight inches of surface to imbibe moisture from below? But I will not theorize—try it for yourselves, brother farmers; and remember the maxim, "Plough deep," &c.

If the present is an index to the future, the hay crop will not be an abundant one, and consequently there may be a close nip among stock. Let us take warning from the past, and prepare for the future, by putting in roots, sowing corn, oats, or anything which will make a profitable feed, either green or dry, just as may be wanted. Ruta bagas will do well, if sown by the 20th of this month, and English flat turnips one month later.

This is an excellent time to clear up some wet, neglected piece of land for them—put on compost muck and plenty of ashes, if at hand. If the land is inclined to be quite moist and heavy, plough in coarse manure, then spread on compost, ridge up with a light plough, level the tops of the furrows, and sow on the ridges.

Fruit and shade trees have suffered severely. The efficacy of mulching, (rotten straw or something of the kind placed around the roots to the depth of six inches,) will now be fully proved. Besides retaining moisture, it keeps the ground mellow, prevents grass or weeds from growing, and affords good nourishment for the tree.

Probably hundreds of choice trees will either die outright, or make so meagre a growth as to be almost worthless, while, with extra attention, many might have been saved, and much vexa-

tion prevented on the part of those who lose the fruit of their labor, or rather do not get any fruit where they had promised themselves a fine orchard.

One cause of failure is in setting too shoal, (although some get into the opposite extreme.) I have observed trees set apparently as deep as where they grew, which, upon the setting of the soil, (in some instances by the working of the tree, which is left to the mercy of the wind,) would leave the upper fibrous roots—the most essential for the support of the tree—quite exposed to sun and wind. Now if these had been properly mulched, there would have been but little risk of failure.

Trees which look doubtful about growing may sometimes be restored, even after the bark has begun to shrivel, by sprinkling the branches, trunk and root thoroughly every night and morning.

Let those who have trees which are pale and feeble, from want of nourishment, attend to them; dig away the grass and weeds—scrape your yards, collect all your rotten rubbish, old bones, rags, and every nuisance about the buildings, and place them around your trees—cover the compound, so that it will not "waste its fragrance on the desert air," with muck or something which will absorb the gases, and in turn become a good fertilizer. The labor brings its reward.

S. N. T.

Vassalboro', 6th mo., 8th.

For the Farmer.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND IMPROVEMENT.

MR. EDITOR.—It is universally admitted that agriculture is the base and trunk of the sustenance and business of the world. Its chronology may be learned from record.

The press keeps a kind of day-book of passing events; the Commissioner of Patents annually posts up the agricultural accounts of the whole country, and makes valuable suggestions, which reach one in a hundred of our population, and are read by one in a hundred of those who receive them. (These facts and suggestions should be thoroughly perused, investigated and understood by the mass.) Much is anticipated from the Agricultural Bureau, as recommended by the President. There has been within the last thirty years, in various States, a whole catalogue of schools, pattern farms, &c., agitated and prayed for without success; and within the same period numerous Agricultural Societies, and shows and fairs have been instituted, with fair promises; but are, at least in this section, on the decline, so far as my knowledge extends. So much for agricultural education.

Now for improvement. This was once the world renowned State for valuable forest timber, with a fertile, virgin soil for all vegetation of our climate—stocked with moose and other game for the pioneer, which have made us what we are, viz.: as enterprising, enlightened, independent and happy a people as there is on earth. Our literary, professional and mechanical men, legislators and mariners, will not suffer by comparison with those of any other State or nation. But alas! our timber, moose and wild game are almost gone, and many of the elements of our virgin soil, are mislaid or lost; and ignorance is too prevalent in the agricultural class. How are we to sustain our high position? What are our resources, and how are they to be rendered available? are questions of small moment.

We have an arable soil, containing the remains of most of the elements of fertility, which may be much improved by draining and deep tillage, both as to elements and temperature. We have storehouses, in rich profusion, scattered throughout our valleys, containing elements of fertility, to an indefinite extent, in the form of muck, clay, &c., which, when prepared by art, are worth as much, load for load, as barn-yard manure, exclusive of what is added, and the addition is an economical auxiliary; and we have an athletic, hard-handed, strong-minded yeomanry, to perform the needful labor, if, by doing it, they can but realize the almighty Yankee dollar. Our agricultural resources are ample to furnish all the food needed for the consumption, and wool and flax for the clothing of the entire population. Our numerous private privileges, (for which steam is an expensive substitute,) mechanical genius and business tact are competent to manufacture for the world, and our facilities for exchanges and our marine interests require no comment. Now to the main question.

How are our resources to be rendered available? By education, and in usual form, like every other science and art. How is this to be effected? It may be asked. Let the forms first alluded to be carried out to prepare the few to instruct the many, and as an inducement, let the masses avail themselves of the means now in their power, viz. let the School Commissioners or Committees obtain, as best they may, primary text books containing the first principles of Scientific Agriculture, as developed by Geology, Chemistry, Botany, Physiology, Philosophy, &c., and introduce them into our Academies and High schools. Any young man, qualified in other respects to teach a common school, would, in a short time, by the aid of the Preceptor, be competent to instruct our boys in nomenclature and the definition of words, or terms, and the prominent properties and action of the elements, and by the help of some simple chemical apparatus, the study would be rendered pleasing and economical. Let this course be commenced and persevered in, and my word for it, there is no loss in the way.

In consultation with well informed gentlemen of this city, the opinion was expressed that the public mind was prepared for the above enterprise, if a feasible and economical form of action could be devised, which would obviate the expensive outlays which pattern-farms would require. I proposed to take the *stump*, (as they say down South,) and have addressed mass meetings in Glenburn, Kenduskeag, (late Levant village,) East Corinth Academy and our City Hall, where the following resolutions were fully canvassed and unanimously passed.

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this meeting that the laws of nature have been so developed by the science of chemistry, that the art of farming may be reduced to fixed principles, and to obtain a knowledge of these principles, requires that our understandings should be informed, which can be effected by a course of tuition and study. We therefore request the Board of Education to give this subject the consideration its

merits demand, and devise ways and means that the rising generation may be prepared to place agriculture on its proper level among the sciences.

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this meeting that the agricultural interest of this State demands an agricultural journal, located in its midst, which shall record statistics, the practical results of improved farming, the valuable part of the communications of common farmers, a series of articles on animal and vegetable physiology, veterinary and kindred subjects, with extracts from foreign papers, adapted to our locality. If the editor of the *Maine Farmer*, (to whom we have confidence,) will accept a prospectus, we pledge ourselves to use our exertions to fill up a subscription list that shall sustain the work of increasing the agricultural matter of that sheet.

At the two former places the following votes were passed:

Voted, That Martin Mower forward these resolutions to the Maine Farmer, and correspond with the Secretary of the Board of Education.

Voted, To request our School Committee to introduce James F. W. Johnston's *Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology* into our schools.

It will readily be perceived that the object of the first resolve is to familiarize the whole mass of scholars with the elementary substances, their nomenclature or names, and definitions, and actions, which substances constitute the animal and vegetable kingdoms; and the second resolve will inform the practical farmer of the management of these elements for the production of vegetable and animal matter, and will constitute his family members of a kind of State conversational club, where they can meet every day in the year, at their own fireside, and interchange views at nominal expense, and the father and son can mutually assist each other, one studying the theory and the other the practice of the art. Should this article meet with a favorable response, or a better plan be proposed, I hold myself in readiness practically to carry out the measures to advance our agricultural interests, by obtaining subscribers, lecturing, giving advice in composting and preserving manures, the construction of barn cellars and out-buildings, and the draining and ridgeing of ground, the construction of drains, general management of the farm, &c., in any section of the State that shall be assigned me.

MARTIN MOWER.

Bangor, May, 1852.

NOTE. The Maine Farmer has always been devoted to the spread of knowledge on the subjects spoken of in our friend's communication, and its columns are always at the service of the farmers, mechanics and productive classes of the State, serving as a medium of communication among them, on the topics immediately connected with their calling.

If the farmers, in any portion of the State, see the necessity of more active and combined action—more union and concert of action among themselves, and are willing to lend the helping hand in the way of *mental and material aid*, we stand ready to enlarge the size of our paper, (as we have already done, several times, since it first started,) in order to give room for additional communications in the several departments above named. We are glad to see the manifestation of a rising spirit of inquiry and improvement among the farmers of Penobscot, and hope their precepts and example will spread over the whole length and breadth of the State, and that the soil and the mind of Maine will ultimately arrive to its greatest pitch of cultivation and productiveness.

En.

Written for the Maine Farmer.

DISEASED KIDNEYS.

MR. EDITOR.—I would inquire of you or some of your readers what will cure my oxen of discharging bloody urine? I have seen many cattle afflicted with this disease, as I term it. There are many medicines recommended, none of which are effectual. I would like to know if it can be cured, and if so, in what way.

O. D. G.

Parkman, June 1, 1852.

NOTE. The cause of the trouble above mentioned is probably owing to an inflamed condition of the kidneys or of the coats of the bladder. Any thing that will reduce inflammation will be useful as a remedy—saltpetre, mixed with common salt, the root of the "Queen of the meadow," (*Eupatorium Verticillatum*, of Botanists), and given freely will be good; a decoction of Buchu leaves, which may be had of the Apothecary, or sometimes common resin, pulverized and mixed with meal, acts beneficially in such cases.

En.

EXHIBITION OF THE WEST SOMERSET AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

To be held at Madison Bridge, Wednesday and Thursday, October 6th and 7th, 1852.

The following list of premiums, recommended by the Standing Committees, is now offered by the Trustees:

On Next Cattle.	
For best town team, not less than 10 yokes, \$8 00	
2d do.	7 00
3d do.	6 00
best town team 3 years old steers, not less than 6 yokes, 4 00	
2d do.	3 00
3d do.	2 00
best yoke working oxen, 3 00	
2d do.	2 00
3d do.	1 00
best yoke draught oxen, 2 00	
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00
best pair 3 years old steers, 2 50	
2d do.	2 00
3d do.	1 00
best pair 2 years old steers, 1 50	
2d do.	1 00
3d do.	75
best pair 1 year old steers, 1 00	
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best pair steer calves, 1 00	
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best bull, 3 00	
2d do.	2 00
3d do.	1 00
best stock cow, 2 00	
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00

For best milch cow,	\$2 00
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00
best 3 years old milch heifer,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best 3 years old stock heifer,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best 2 years old heifer,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best 1 year old heifer,	75
2d do.	50
3d do.	25
best bull calf,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best heifer calf,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50

On Sheep.

best buck,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best ewes, not less than 8,	2 00
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00

On Horses.

best stallion,	2 00
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00
best breeding mare,	2 00
2d do.	1 50
3d do.	1 00
best 3 years old colt,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best 2 years old colt,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
best 1 year old colt,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50

On Manufactured Articles.

best butter, not less than 40 pounds,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
4th do.	25
best cheese, not less than 20 pounds,	1 00
2d do.	75
3d do.	50
4th do.	25
best pair thick boots,	50
best pair thin boots,	25
best pair shoes,	25
best 3 dozen shoes,	50
best set horse shoes and nails,	50
best set ox do.	50
best 3 sides upper leather,	50
best 3 sides sole do.	50

All entries must be made with the Secretary before nine o'clock on the day of exhibition.

Committees.

On *Threshing and Working Oxen*. Col. Wm. Hayden, David M. Lane, Jas. M. Hilton.

On *Draught Oxen*. Jas. G. Waugh, David Elder, Edgar Hilton.

On *Bulls and Bull Calves*. Nathan Weston, Samuel W. Tinkham, Hanson Hight.

On *Cows*. Bradbury T. Dinsmore, Rufus Bixby, Benjamin Hilton.

On *Heifers and Heifer Calves*. Amos Adams, John Wasson, Jr., Orrin Parkman.

On *Three years old and two years old Steers*. Perry Moore, John Burns, Jr., Elijah Hilton.

On *Yearling Steers and Steer Calves*. Cyrus Goodrich, Sutherland W. Smith, John Bray.

On *Horses*. Sperman W. Haggard, Enoch Weston, Daniel Waugh.

On *Sheep*. Wm. R. Flint, Quincy P. Wood, Simon Bixby.

On *Manufactured Articles*. Calvin Fletcher, Columbus Steward, Wilborn D. Earl.

Incidental Committee. Wm. B. Snow, Mahlon D. Spaulding, Abijah Colman.

Committee of Arrangements. Elijah Hilton, John H. Hardy, Edgar Hilton.

ALDEN FLINT, Secretary.

Madison, June 3, 1852.

PRINCIPLES OF BREEDING. No. 3.

In previous chapters, we have alluded to the fact that certain alterations may be produced in the form and habits of animals, by which they are better adapted to the purposes of man. It is of so great importance to the stock-breeder to know how this improvement can be effected, that we propose to devote a few further remarks to the illustration of the subject.

It is a law of nature, applicable to both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, that "like produces like." This, however, is only true in a general sense. The idea which it is intended to express is, that each group, or species of plant or animal, possesses certain characters which are continued by reproduction. Man, for example, has an organization which distinguishes him from every other animal; but all men are not exactly alike; there are variations of structure and habit, though the variations are confined to a limited sphere, and are never such as to interfere with the generic boundaries. It is so with other animals—there are certain minor differences within each species, race, or breed. Sometimes these differences are of such a kind as to enhance the value of the animal in which they appear, for a specific purpose. The animal may have a color, shape, tendency to fatten, quality of flesh, or other property, which is particularly desirable, and which is not usually found. It is therefore an object to multiply this property to the greatest practicable degree, and the progeny of the animal, or those which exhibit the desired properties, are carefully reared and allowed to propagate.

Now it is obvious that these variations constitute the basis of improvement in the race or breed. The animals which possess in the greatest degree the properties which render them valuable for any special purpose, are selected and bred together. There is not an exact resemblance among their progeny; some have less of the points which are the special object of the breeder than their progenitors, and some may have more of them. The proper course will be to select the best for breeding—to seize on those variations which most favor the grand object—and to pursue this from generation to generation.

Thus, by the exercise of due judgment, animals are finally obtained which, without change of blood, exhibit a marked contrast with the general character of the breed at the time the selection was commenced.

The system above laid down, applies strictly to the breeding of animals without crossing—the stock being wholly selected within a particular breed. As examples of this course, we may refer to the improvement of the South Down sheep by Elliman, Webb, and others,—of the Spanish, or Merino by the Germans,—of the Hereford cattle by Tumkins, Tully and Price,—of the Devon by the Quartlys, and Turner,—of the Jerseys or Alderneys by Le Couteur, and others.

Breeding by crossing distinct breeds and rearing a new stock from the progeny, differs, of course, in the outset from the former. Among the several has been made, however, and the ideal standard established in the mind of the breeder, the selections will be made with reference to this standard.

So that with the exception of the diverse origin of the parent stock, the two systems of breeding are similar in principle—the object in both being the production of animals of particular properties, and the selection being wholly directed to those which possess them.

We have shown that vague notions are entertained in regard to breeding in-and-in. Equal confusion prevails in many instances, on the subject of crossing. Some persons, through fear of the injurious consequences of consanguineous breeding, would cross every species and breed which is capable of intermixture—thus breaking down many of those important distinctions by which the adaptation of animals to particular situations and purposes is secured. On the other hand, some run into the opposite extreme—deny that any improvement has ever been effected by crossing, and contend that it should never be allowed. Perhaps a better illustration of the maxim is to "extremes are good for nothing," could not be given than is presented in those opposite positions.

We have already referred to various examples

